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...Treasure Trove...

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Treasure Trove

Forty Famous Poems
by various authors.....

Compiled by

WILLIAM S. LORD, comp.

THE INDEX COMPANY
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1898

HENRY MORSE STEPHENS

ON HIS BLINDNESS.

When I consider how my light was spent
Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest he returning chide,—
Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?
I fondly ask:—But Patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies: God doth not need
Either man's work, or his own gifts: who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best: His state
Is kingly: thousands at his bidding speed
And post o'er land and ocean without rest:—
They also serve who only stand and wait.

—*John Milton*

SONG FROM "AS YOU LIKE IT."

Blow, blow, thou winter wind!
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen
Because thou art not seen,
Altho thy breath be rude.
Heigh ho! sing heigh ho! unto the green holly!
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly;
Then heigh ho! the holly!
This life is most jolly!

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
Thou dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot;
Tho' thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remember'd not.
Heigh ho! sing heigh ho! unto the green holly!
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly;
Then, heigh ho! the holly!
This life is most jolly

—*William Shakespeare.*

CONCORD FIGHT.

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the world.

The foe long since in silence slept;
Alike the conquerer silent sleeps;
And Time the ruined bridge has swept,
Down the dark stream which seaward creeps.

On this green bank, by this soft stream,
We set today a votive stone;
That memory may their deed redeem,
When, like our sires, our sons are gone.

Spirit, that made those heroes dare
To die, and leave their children free,
Bid Time and Nature gently spare
The shaft we raise to them and thee.

—*Ralph Waldo Emerson.*

A VALENTINE.

Choose me your Valentine!
Next, let us marry!
Love to the death will pine
If we long tarry.

Promise and keep your vows,
Or vow you never!
Love's doctrine disallows
Troth-breakers ever.

You have broke promise twice,
Dear, to undo me.
If you prove faithless thrice,
None then will woo ye.

—*Robert Herrick.*

RUTH.

She stood breast high amid the corn,
Clasp'd by the golden light of morn,
Like the sweetheart of the Sun,
Who many a glowing kiss had won.

On the cheek an autumn flush
Deeply ripened; such a blush
In the midst of brown was born,
Like red poppies grown with corn.

Round her eyes her tresses fell,—
Which were blackest none could tell;
But long lashes veiled a light
That had else been all to bright.

And her hat with shady brim
Made her tressy forehead dim:
Thus she stood amid the stooks,
Praising God with sweetest looks.

Sure, I said, heaven did not mean
Where I reap thou shouldst but glean:
Lay thy sheaf adown, and come!
Share my harvest and my home!

—*Thomas Hood.*

THE TIGER.

Tiger! Tiger, burning bright
In the forests of the night!
What immortal hand or eye
Framed thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies
Burn'd the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder, and what art,
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And, when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand forged thy dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain?
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? What dread grasp
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears,
And watered heaven with their tears,
Did He smile His work to see?
Did He who made the lamb make thee?

Tiger! Tiger, burning bright
In the forests of the night!
What immortal hand or eye
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

—*William Blake.*

HEBE.

I saw the twinkle of white feet,
I saw the flash of robes descending;
Before her ran an influence fleet,
That bowed my heart like barley bending.

As, in bare fields, the searching bees
Pilot to blooms beyond our finding,
It led me on, by sweet degrees
Joy's simple honey-cells unbinding.

Those graces were that seemed grim Fates;
With nearer love the sky leaned o'er me;
The long-sought Secret's golden gates
On musical hinges swung before me.

I saw the brimmed bowl in her grasp
Thrilling with godhood; like a lover
I sprang the proffered life to clasp:—
The beaker fell; the luck was over.

The Earth has drunk the vintage up;
What boots it patch the goblet's splinters?
Can Summer fill the icy cup,
Whose treacherous crystal is but Winter's?

O spendthrift haste? await the Gods;
Their nectar; crowns the lips of Patience;
Haste scatters on ungrateful sods
The immoral gift in vain libations.

Coy Hebe flies from those that woo,
And shuns the hands would seize upon her;
Follow thy life, and she will sue
To pour for thee the cup of honor.

—*James Russell Lowell.*

LOST YOUTH.

There are gains for all our losses,
  There are balms for all our pain;
But when youth, the dream, departs,
It takes something from our hearts,
  And it never comes again.

We are stronger, and are better,
  Under manhood's sterner reign;
Still we feel that something sweet
Followed youth, with flying feet,
  And will never come again.

Something beautiful is vanished,
  And we sigh for it in vain;
We behold it everywhere,
On the earth, and in the air;
  But it never comes again.

—*Richard Henry Stoddard.*

LIGHT.

The night has a thousand eyes
  And the day but one,
Yet the light of the bright world dies
  With the dying sun.

The mind has a thousand eyes,
  And the heart but one;
Yet the light of a whole life dies
  When love is done.

—*Francis William Bourdillon.*

THE DYING CHRISTIAN TO HIS SOUL.

Vital spark of heavenly flame!
Quit, oh! quit this mortal frame:
Trembling, hoping, lingering, flying—
Oh, the pain, the bliss of dying;
Cease, fond nature, cease thy strife,
And let me languish into life.

Hark! they whisper: angels say,
Sister spirit, come away.
What is this absorbs me quite,
Steals my senses, shuts my sight,
Drowns my spirits, draws my breath?
Tell me, my soul, can this be death?

The world recedes; it disappears!
Heaven opens on my eyes! my ears
With sounds seraphic ring:
Lend, lend you wings! I mount! I fly!
Oh, Grave! where is thy victory?
Oh, Death! where is thy sting?

—*Alexander Pope.*

WHEN SHE COMES HOME.

When she come home again! A thousand ways
I fashion, to myself, the tenderness
Of my glad welcome: I shall tremble—yes;
And touch her, as when first in the old days
I touched her girlish hand, nor dared upraise
Mine eyes, such was my faint heart's sweet distress.
Then silence: and the perfume of her dress:
The room will sway a little, and a haze
Cloy eyesight—soulsight, even—for a space;
And tears—yes; and the ache here in the throat,
To know that I so ill deserve the place
Her arms make for me; and the sobbing note
I stay with kisses, ere the tearful face
Again is hidden in the old embrace.

—*James Whitcomb Riley.*

VIRTUE.

Sweet day! so cool, so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the earth and sky,
The dew shall weep thy fall tonight—
For thou must die.

Sweet Rose! whose hue, angry and brave,
Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye,
Thy root is ever in its grave;
And thou must die.

Sweet spring! full of sweet days and roses;
A box where sweets compacted lie;
My music shows ye have your closes;—
And all must die.

Only a sweet and virtuous soul
Like seasoned timber, never gives;
But, though the whole world turn to coal,
Then chiefly lives.

—*George Herbert.*

THE TOYS.

My little son, who look'd from thoughtful eyes
And moved and spoke in quiet grown-up wise,
Having my law the seventh time disobey'd,
I struck him, and dismiss'd
With hard words and unkiss'd,
His mother, who was patient, being dead.
Then fearing lest his grief should hinder sleep,
I visited his bed,
But found him slumbering deep,
With darken'd eyelids, and their lashes yet
From his late sobbing wet.
And I, with a moan,
Kissing away his tears, left others of my own;
For, on the table drawn beside his head,
He had put, within his reach,
A box of counters, and a red-veined stone,
A piece of glass, abraded by the beach,
And six or seven shells,
A bottle with bluebells,
And two French copper coins, ranged there with careful art,
To comfort his sad heart.
So when that night I pray'd
To God, I wept, and said:
Ah, when at last we lie with tranced breath,
Not vexing thee in death,
And thou rememberest of what toys
We made our joys,
How weakly understood
Thy great commanded good,
Then, fatherly no less
Than I, whom thou hast molded from the clay,
Thou'lt leave thy wrath and say,
"I will be sorry for their childishness."

—*Coventry Patmore.*

FORBEARANCE.

Hast thou named all the birds without a gun?
Loved the wood-rose, and left it on its stalk?
At rich men's tables eaten bread and pulse?
Unarmed faced danger with a heart of trust?
And loved so well a high behavior,
In man or maid, that thou from speech refrained,
Nobility more nobly to repay?
O, be my friend, and teach me to be thine.

—*Ralph Waldo Emerson.*

TO ALTHEA, FROM PRISON.

When love with unconfined wings
  Hovers within my gates,
And my divine Althea brings
  To whisper at the grates;
When I lie tangled in her hair
  And fettered to her eye,
The birds that wanton in the air
  Know no such liberty.

When flowing cups run swiftly round
  With no allaying Thames,
Our careless heads with roses crown'd,
  Our hearts with loyal flames;
When thirsty grief in wine we steep,
  When healths and draughts go free,
Fishes that tipple in the deep,
  Know no such liberty.

Stone walls do not a prison make,
  Nor iron bars a cage;
Minds innocent and quiet take
  That for a hermitage.
If I have freedom in my love,
  And in my soul am free,
Angels alone that soar above
  Enjoy such liberty.

—*Richard Lovelace.*

PHILIP, MY KING:

Look at me with thine large brown eyes,
Philip, my king!
For round thee the purple shadow lies
Of babyhood's royal dignities.
Lay on my neck thy tiny hand,
With love's invisible scepter laden.
I am thine Esther to command
Till thou shalt find thy queen handmaiden,
Philip, my king!

Oh, the day thou goest a-wooing,
Philip, my king!
When those beautiful lips 'gin suing,
And, some gentle heart's bars undoing,
Thou dost enter, love crowned, and, there
Sittest love glorified! Rule kindly,
Tenderly, over thy kingdom fair,
For we that love, ah, we love so blindly,
Philip, my king!

I gaze from thy sweet mouth up to thy brow,
Philip, my king!
The spirit that there lies sleeping now
May rise like a giant and make men bow
As to one heaven chosen among his peers.
My Saul, than thy brethren higher and fairer,
Let me behold thee in future years!
Yet thy head needeth a circlet rarer,
Philip, my king!

A wreath, not of gold, but palm. One day,
Philip, my king!
Thou, too, must tread, as we trod, a way
Thorny and cruel and cold and gray.
Rebels within thee and foes without
Will snatch at thy crown, but march, glorious,
Martyr, yet monarch, till angels shout,
As thou sitt'st at the feet of God victorious,
"Philip, my king!"

—*Dinah Muloch Craik.*

RECESSIONAL.

God of our fathers, known of old—
Lord of our far-flung battle line—
Beneath whose awful hand we hold
Dominion over palm and pine—
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

The tumult and the shouting dies—
The captains and the kings depart—
Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,
An humble and a contrite heart.
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

Far-called our navies melt away—
On dune and headland sinks the fire—
Lo, all our pomp of yesterday
Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!
Judge of the nations, spare us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

If, drunk with sight of power, we loose
Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe—
Such boasting as the Gentiles use
Or lesser breeds without the law—
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

For heathen heart that puts her trust
In reeking tube and iron shard—
All valiant dust that builds on dust,
And guarding calls not Thee to guard—
For frantic boast and foolish word,
Thy mercy on Thy people, Lord.

—*Rudyard Kipling.*

THE APOLOGY.

Think me not unkind and rude,
That I walk alone in grove and glen;
I go to the God of the wood
To fetch his word to men.

Tax not my sloth that I
Fold my arms beside the brook;
Each cloud that floated in the sky
Writes a letter in my book.

Chide me not, laborious band,
For the idle flowers I brought.
Every aster in my hand
Goes home loaded with a thought.

There was never mystery
But 'tis figured in the flowers:
Was never sacred history
But birds tell it in the bowers.

One harvest from thy field
Homeward brought the oxen strong;
A second crop thy acres yield
Which I gather in a song.

—*Ralph Waldo Emerson.*

SONG FROM THE PASSIONATE PILGRIM

Crabbed Age and Youth
Cannot live together;
Youth is full of pleasance,
Age is full of care;
Youth like summer morn,
Age like wintry weather;
Youth like summer brave,
Age like winter bare;
Youth is full of sport,
Age's breath is short;
Youth is nimble, Age is lame;
Youth is hot and bold,
Age is weak and cold;
Youth is wild, and Age is tame;
Age, I do abhor thee,
Youth, I do adore thee;
O my Love, my Love is young!
Age, I do defy thee—
O sweet shepherd, hie thee,
For methinks thou stay'st too long.

—*William Shakespeare.*

SONNET.

Highway, since you my chief Parnassus be,
And that my muse, to some ears not unsweet,
Tempers her words to trampling horses' feet
More apt than to a chamber melody,—
Now blessed you bear onward blessed me
To her, where I my heart, safe-left, shall meet;
My muse and I must you of duty greet
With thanks and wishes, wishing thankfully;
Be you still fair, honored by public heed;
By no encroachment wrong'd, nor time forgot;
Nor blamed for blood, nor shamed for sinful deed;
And that you know I envy you no lot
Of highest wish, I wish you so much bliss—
Hundreds of years you Stella's feet may kiss.

—*Sir Philip Sidney.*

THE CROSS OF SNOW.

In the long, sleepless watches of the night,
A gentle face—the face of one long dead—
Looks at me from the wall, where round its head
The night-lamp casts a halo of pale light.
Here in this room she died; and soul more white
Never through martyrdom of fire was led
To its repose; nor can in books be read
The legend of a life more benedight.
There is a mountain in the distant West
That, sun-defying, in its deep ravines
Displays a cross of snow upon its side.
Such is the cross I wear upon my breast
These eighteen years, through all the changing scenes
And seasons, changeless since the day she died.

—*Henry W. Longfellow.*

VISION.

I never saw a moor,
I never saw the sea;
Yet I know how the heather looks
And what a wave must be.
I never spoke with God,
Nor visited in Heaven;
Yet certain am I of the spot
As if the chart were given.

—*Emily Dickinson.*

THE SWANS OF WILTON.

O how the swans of Wilton
  Twenty abreast did go,
Like country brides bound for the church,
  Sails set and all aglow!
With pouting breast, in pure white dressed,
  Soft gliding in a row.

Where through the weed's green fleeces,
  The perch in brazen-coat,
Like golden shuttles mermaid's use,
  Shot past my crimson float:
Where swinish carp were snoring loud
  Around the anchored boat.

Adown the gentle river
  The white swans bore in sail,
Their full soft feathers puffing out
  Like canvas in the gale;
And all the kine and dappled deer
  Stood watching in the vale.

The stately swans of Wilton
  Strutted and puffed along,
Like canons in their full white gown,
  Late for the even song,
Whom up the vale the peevish bell
  In vain has chided long.

O how the Swans of Wilton
  Bore down the radiant stream;
As calm as holy hermits' lives,
  Or a play-tired infant's dream;
Like fairy beds of last year's snow,
  Did those radiant creatures seem.

—*Unknown.*

ODE TO AUTUMN.

Seasons of mists and mellow fruitfulness!
Close bosom friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run,
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel: to set budding more,
And still more later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease,
For summer has o'erbrimmed their clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;
Or on the half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,
Drowsed with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers;
And sometime like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook;
Or by a cider press, with patient look
Thou watchest the last oozings, hours by hours.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music, too,
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir the small gusts mourn
Among the river sallows, borne aloft,
Or sinking, as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;
Hedge-crickets sing; and now with treble soft
The red-breast whistles from the garden-croft,
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

—*John Keats.*

Behind him lay the gray Azores,
  Behind the gates of Hercules:
Before him not the ghost of shores,
  Before him only shoreless seas.
The good mate said: "Now must we pray,
  For lo, the very stars are gone.
Brave Adm'rl, speak; what shall I say?"
  "Why say, 'Sail on, sail on, and on.'"

"My men grow mutinous day by day;
  My men grow ghastly wan and weak."
The stout mate thought of home; a spray
  Of salt wave washed his swarthy cheek.
"What shall I say, brave Adm'rl, say,
  If we wight not but seas at dawn?"
"Why, you shall say at break of day,
  'Sail on, sail on, sail on, and on.'"

They sailed and sailed, as winds might blow
  Until at last the blanched mate said:
"Why, now not even God would know
  Should I and all my men fall dead.
These very winds forget their way,
  For God from these dread seas is gone;
Now speak, brave Adm'rl; speak and say."
  He said: "Sail on, sail on, and on."

They sailed. They sailed. Then spoke the mate:
  "This mad sea shows its teeth tonight.
He curls his lip, he lies in wait,
  With lifted teeth as if to bite;
Brave Adm'rl, say but one good word.
  What shall we do when hope is gone?"
The words leapt as a leaping sword:
  "Sail on, sail on, sail on, and on."

Then, pale and worn, he kept his deck,
  And peered through darkness. Oh, the night
Of all dark nights. And then a speck—
  A light: a light: a light: a light:
It grew: a starlit flag unfurled:
  It grew to be time's burst of dawn.
He gained a world; he gave that world
  Its greatest lesson, "On and on."

—*Joaquin Miller.*

FROM STANZAS ON FREEDOM.

Is true freedom but to break
Fetters for our own dear sake
And, with leathern hearts, forget
That we owe mankind a debt?
No; true freedom is to share
All the chains our brothers wear
And, with heart and hand, to be
Earnest to make others free.

They are slaves who fear to speak
For the fallen and the weak.
They are slaves who will not choose
Hatred, scoffing and abuse
Rather than in silence shrink
From the truth they needs must think.
They are slaves who dare not be
In the right with two or three.

James Russell Lowell.

FROM VOLUNTARIES.

In an age of fops and toys,
  Wanting wisdom, void of right,
Who shall nerve heroic boys
  To hazard all in Freedom's fight,—
Break sharply off their jolly games,
  Forsake their comrades gay,
And quit proud homes and youthful dames
  For famine, toil and fray?
Yet on the nimble air benign
  Speed nimbler messages,
That waft the breath of grace divine
  To hearts in sloth and ease.
So nigh is grandeur to our dust,
  So near is God to man,
When duty whispers low, *Thou must*,
  The youth replies, *I can.*

—Ralph Waldo Emerson.

TO DAFFODILS.

Faire Daffodils, we weep to see
You haste away so soon:
As yet the early-rising sun
Has not attained his noone.
Stay, stay,
Until the hasting day
Has run
But to the even-song;
And, having pray'd together, we
Will goe with you along!

We have short time to stay as you;
We have as short a spring;
As quick a growth to meet decay,
As you, or any thing.
We die,
As your hours doe, and drie
Away,
Like the summer's rain;
Or as the pearles of morning's dew,
Ne'er to be found againe.

—*Robert Herrick.*

SHE WAS A PHANTOM OF DELIGHT.

She was a phantom of delight
When first she gleamed upon my sight;
A lovely apparation, sent
To be a moment's ornament.
Her eyes as stars of twilight fair;
Like twilight, too, her dusky hair,
But all things else about her drawn,
From May-time and the cheerful Dawn ;
A dancing shape, an image gay,
To haunt, to startle, and waylay.

I saw her upon nearer view,
A spirit, yet a woman, too!
Her household motions light and free,
And steps of virgin liberty;
A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet;
A creature not too bright or good,
For human nature's daily food;
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears and smiles.

And now I see with eye serene,
The very pulse of the machine;
A being, breathing thoughtful breath,
A traveller between life and death ;
The reason firm, the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength and skill;
A perfect woman, nobly planned,
To warn, to comfort; and command.
And yet a spirit, still and bright
With something of an angel light.

—*William Wordsworth.*

THE ORGAN.

It is no harmony of human making,
Though men have built those pipes of burnished gold
Their music out of nature's heart awaking,
Forever new, forever is of old.

Man makes not—only finds—all earthly beauty,
Catching a thread of sunshine here and there,
Some shining pebble in the path of duty,
Some echo of the songs that flood the air.

That prelude is a wind among the willows
Rising until it meets the torrents roar;
Now a wild ocean, beating his great billows,
Among the hollow caverns of the shore.

It is the voice of some vast people pleading
For justice, from an ancient shame and wrong;
The tramp of God's avenging armies, treading
With shouted thunders of triumphant song.

O, soul that sittest chanting dreary dirges,
Could'st thou but rise on some divine desire,
As those deep chords upon the swelling surges
Bear up the wavering voices of the choir!

But ever lurking in the heart there lingers
The trouble of a false and jarring tone,
As some great organ which unskillful fingers
Vex into discords when the master's gone.

—*Unknown.*

IDENTITY.

Somewhere—in desolate, wind swept space.
In Twilight-land—in No-man's-land—
Two hurrying Shapes met face to face,
And bade each other stand.

"And who are you?" cried one a-gape,
Shuddering in the gloaming light.
"I know not," said the second Shape,
"I only died last night!"

—*Thomas Bailey Aldrich.*

BUGLE SONG.

The splendor falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story;
The long light shakes across the lakes,
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O hark, O hear! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going;
O sweet and far, from cliff and scar,
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying:
Blow bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river:
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
Which grow forever and forever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

—*Alfred, Lord Tennyson.*

NIGHT.

Swiftly walk over the Western wave,
Spirit of Night!
Out of the misty Eastern cave,
Where, all the long and lone daylight,
Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear,
Which make thee terrible and dear;
Swift be thy flight!

Wrap thy form in a mantle gray,
Star inwrought!
Blind with thine hair the eyes of Day!
Kiss him until he be wearied out;
Then wander o'er city and sea and land,
Touching all with thine opiate wand!
Come, long sought!

When I arose and saw the dawn,
I sighed for thee;
When light rode high, and dew was gone,
And noon lay heavy on flower and tree;
And the weary Day turned to his rest,
Lingering like an unloved guest,
I sighed for thee.

Thy brother Death came, and cried,
"Wouldst thou me?"
Thy sweet child, Sleep the filmy-eyed,
Murmur'd like a noon-tide bee—
"Shall I nestle by thy side?
Wouldst thou me?" And I replied—
No! not thee.

Death will come when thou art dead,
Soon, too soon!
Sleep will come when thou art fled;
Of neither would I ask the boon
I ask of thee, beloved Night!
Swift be thine approaching flight!
Come soon, soon!

—*Percy Bysshe Shelley.*

AT THE CHURCH GATE.

Although I enter not,
Yet round about the spot
    Ofttimes I hover;
And near the sacred gate,
With longing eyes I wait,
    Expectant of her.

The minster bell tolls out
Above the city's rout
    And noise and humming.
They've hushed the minster bell!
The organ 'gins to swell;
    She's coming, she's coming!

My lady comes at last,
Timid and stepping fast,
    And hastening hither,
With modest eyes downcast;
She comes, she's here, she's past!
    May heaven go with her!

Kneel undisturbed, fair saint!
Pour out your praise or plaint
    Meekly and duly;
I will not enter there,
To sully your pure prayer
    With thoughts unruly.

But suffer me to pace
Round the forbidden place,
    Lingering a minute,
Like outcast spirits, who wait,
And see, through heaven's gate,
    Angels within it.

—*William Makepeace Thackeray.*

DAFFODILS.

I wandered lonely as a cloud
  That floats on high o'er vale and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
  A host of golden daffodils,
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
  And twinkle on the milky way.
They stretched in never-ending line
  Along the margin of the bay;
Ten thousand saw I at a glance
Tossing their heads in sprighty dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they
  Outdid the sparkling waves in glee—
A Poet could not but be gay
  In such a jocund company!
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought;

For oft, when on my couch I lie
  In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
  Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

—*William Wordsworth.*

NIGHT AND DEATH.

Mysterious Night, when our first parent knew
  Thee, from divine report, and heard thy name,
  Did he not tremble for this lovely Frame,
This glorious canopy of Light and Blue?
Yet 'neath a curtain of translucent dew,
  Bathed in the ray of the great setting Flame,
  Hesperus with the Host of Heaven, came.
And lo! Creation widened on Man's view.
Who could have thought such darkness lay concealed
  Within thy beams, O Sun! or who could find
Whilst flower, and leaf, and insect stood revealed,
  That to such countless Orbs thou mad'st us blind!
Why do we then shun Death with anxious strife?
If Light can thus deceive wherefore not Life.

—*Joseph Blanco White.*

THE CHAMBERED NAUTILUS.

This is the ship of pearl, which, poets feign,
Sails the unshadowed main,—
The venturous bark that flings
On the sweet summer wind its purple wings
In gulfs enchanted, where the Siren sings,
And coral reefs lie bare,
Where the cold sea-maids rise to sun their streaming hair.

Its webs of living gauze no more unfurl;
Wrecked is the ship of pearl!
And every chambered cell,
Where its dim dreaming life was wont to dwell,
As the frail tenant shaped his growing shell,
Before thee lies revealed,—
Its irised ceiling rent, its sunless crypt unsealed!

Year after year beheld the silent toil
That spread his lustrous coil;
Still, as the spiral grew,
He left the past year's dwelling for the new,
Stole with soft step its shining arch-way through,
Built up its idle door,
Stretched in his last-found home, and knew the old no more.

Thanks for the heavenly message brought by thee,
Child of the wandering sea,
Cast from her lap, forlorn!
From thy dead lips a clearer note is born
Than ever Triton blew from wreathed horn!
While on my ear it rings,
Through the deep caves of thought I hear a voice that sings:—

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thy outgrown shell by life's unresting sea!

—*Oliver Wendell Holmes.*

ON THE DEATH OF JOSEPH RODMAN DRAKE.

Green be the turf above thee
  Friend of my better days,
None knew thee but to love thee,
  Nor named thee but to praise.

Tears fell when thou wert dying,
  From eyes unused to weep,
And long, where thou art lying,
  Will tears the cold turf steep.

When hearts, whose truth was proven,
  Like thine, are laid in earth,
There should a wreath be woven,
  To tell the world their worth.

And I who woke each morrow
  To clasp thy hand in mine,
Who shared thy joy and sorrow,
  Where weal and woe were thine.

It should be mine to braid it
  Around thy faded brow,
But I've in vain essayed it,
  And feel I cannot now.

While memory bids me weep thee,
  Nor thoughts nor words are free,
The grief is fixed too deeply
  That mourns a man like thee.

—*Fitz-Greene Halleck.*

SONNET.

This world is too much with us: late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers;
Little we see of nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away,—a sordid boon!
This sea that bares her bosom to the moon,—
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are upgathered now like sleeping flowers,—
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;
It moves us not. Great God! I'd rather be
A Pagan, suckled in a creed outworn:
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea,
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn.

—*William Wordsworth.*

CROSSING THE BAR.

Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar
When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no moaning of farewell,
When I embark:

For though from out our bourne of time and place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crossed the bar.

—*Alfred, Lord Tennyson.*

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